



# GoodNewsNotes

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON
OFFICE FOR PARISH LIFE

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## Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

***"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you."***

*Jeremiah 1:5*

*The Catholic Bishops of the United States have designated January 22 as a particular day of prayer and penance, called the "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children." As individuals we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or almsgiving. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided resources to help parishes, schools, families, ministries, and individual Catholics participate in this important day of prayer and penance.*

### Resource Guide

[Click here](#) for the 2021 Resource Guide that includes a list of simple steps to participate in the Day of Prayer, homily helps, sample intercessions, bulletin quotes and graphics, as well as the 9 Days for Life Novena.

### Mass for Life

On Friday, January 22, 2021, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will celebrate a Mass for Life in observance of the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. The 12:10 p.m. will be broadcast live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter and can be found on CTV and Diocesan social media.

### Rosary for Life

A recording of a Rosary for Life featuring faithful from across the Diocese of Scranton will be available in mid-January. This resource can be used for private prayer, or as a parish resource.

### Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Prayer Service

Tuesday, January 19, 2021  
at 12:10PM  
on CTV and  
Diocesan Social Media

### Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

Friday, January 22, 2021

### Sunday of the Word of God

January 24, 2021



## Faith Alive!

The Office for Parish Life and the Directors of Religious Education have been busy discovering all the benefits available through Faith Alive! Powered by Edmodo.

Zoom integration has begun and is working well. Not only are the Directors of Religious Ed and catechists able to interact online with their families, they are also able to see each other face to face. This has been such a gift for all. We are excited for Lent, we will be adding more features to our already amazing platform. Each feature added will reduce the time it takes your parish ministry leaders to create faith experiences, ministerial development, family formation events, youth ministry ideas and so much more. This will all be found in one place, with the click of a button.

To learn more, please contact Jacki Douglas at [jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org) (570)207-2213 x-1100.

## What is *Christ Awaits*?

The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, in partnership with [RCL Benziger](http://RCLBenziger.com), is proud to announce *Christ Awaits*!

*Christ Awaits* is a 7-month process that accompanies ministry leaders as they prepare for ongoing change. This event will feature a participant retreat, live presentations, pre-recorded workshops, opportunities for networking, a written resource on managing ongoing change, and facilitated cohort discussions with other participants from across the nation.

The event begins on December 29 when the first workshop will become available. Cohorts gather bi-weekly beginning January 5. A participant retreat will be offered on January 14 with programming continuing through February 16.

\*Pre-recorded content will first become available on the day it is released. Live content will be archived to our site for later viewing. If you are interested in more information, please email [jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org).

## Remote Networking Meetings

We are excited to continue our Remote Webex Network Meetings for DREs and Youth Ministers. These meetings will keep with the focus that we began at the onset of the pandemic. We have spent quite a bit of time discussing our online platform, however, since we are up and running we will be adding more new and exciting topics to discuss. As well as joining together for prayer and reflections. We would love to have every parish repre-

sented. So we invite each of you to join us every other Wednesday at 11AM. Our upcoming meeting dates are January 13 & 27 February 10 & 24. For more information, please contact Jacki Douglas, Director of Word and Life-long Faith Formation, Office for Parish Life. [jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org) (570)207-2213 x-1100.

## Instant Access to New Resources

For compassionate understanding and spiritual support through some of life's most difficult challenges, the Office for Parish Life is happy to offer much-needed resources available instantly, online. These videos range from faith formation to biblical teachings to a full selection of grief and social issues from Paraclete Press.

Parishes can benefit from Instant Access to the Complete Video Streaming Library — a collection of more than 50 full-length videos. Each parish can share access with staff members, small group leaders, pastoral care coordinators, teachers, and church members who serve in a variety of ministries!

Find immediate, trusted support on a wide range of topics including:

- [Grief and Bereavement](#)
- [Social Issues](#)
- [Faith Formation for Adults](#)
- [Faith Formation for Children](#)

Paraclete's award-winning line of videos have earned praise from experts in these fields. For more information, contact the Office for Parish Life at 570-207-2213 or email [jhouse1@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jhouse1@dioceseofscranton.org) or [jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org) To access the Paraclete Video Streaming Library, visit [paracletevideostreaming.com](http://paracletevideostreaming.com).

## Lenten Inspiration for Families

As your Lenten plans evolve, please know that the Office for Parish Life Office remains focused on your work and ministry therefore, we will continue to send you resources to stay connected during Lent. Below is a Lenten Retreat offered through Sadlier on January 21, 2021 beginning at 11:00AM. We hope that you can join us. If you are interested in attending this retreat, please email [jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org).

The three Lenten practices – prayer, penance, and almsgiving – offer a particular way of being lived out within the home. This is especially true as we navigate these challenging times. Join us for a webinar on ideas for families that mesh with the fabric of their lives during the six weeks of Lent. Suggestions for resources, online inspiration, and ways of connecting home and parish will be offered.

## Confirmations with Bishop Bambera

As you know from previous messages, Bishop Bambera intends to celebrate Confirmations in the Spring as scheduled. Because of social distancing requirements, **the planned combined parish Confirmations will need to be adjusted**, with Bishop celebrating the sacrament with as many Confirmandi and guests as a given space will allow safely. Some parishes previously scheduled for these combined celebrations will now celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with your Pastor. The dates already published are still reserved for these celebrations, with a few minor changes or additions for larger parishes needing more than one gathering. **EACH Pastor of the parishes listed for 2021 will be contacted to review the plans for your parish or parish grouping.**

All other parishes **who were not scheduled to have Confirmations with Bishop Bambera in 2021** will proceed, as planned, with celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation with your Pastor on the **Feast of Pentecost**.

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be observed from Monday, January 18 through Monday, January 25, 2021. A sample ecumenical celebration of the Word of God is available through the [Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute website](#) at [www.geii.org](http://www.geii.org).

## Rite of Election

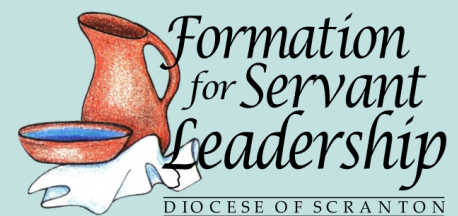
Because of the current pandemic, there will be three celebrations of the Rite of Election to safely accommodate all of catechumens and candidates. **The Rite of Election will be held on Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. and at 1:30 p.m., and on Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. at the Cathedral.** For the sake of meeting safety protocols, the assignment of parishes to each celebration will be completed once we have your registrations.

Please [click here](#) for important information concerning changes to the Rite of Election. Please register all catechumens and candidates no later than Friday, January 29, 2021. If you have any questions, please call 570-207-2213 or email [oplgeneral@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:oplgeneral@dioceseofscranton.org).

## World Day of the Sick

A Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Bambera for the twenty-ninth World Day of the Sick on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 12:10PM at the Cathedral of Saint Peter. Parishes around the diocese are encouraged to offer a Mass for the Sick either on February 11 or another convenient day near it, but because of the current health crisis, the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is not to be offered communally. Resources for World Day of the Sick can be found on the [diocesan website](#) or on the [National Association of Catholic Chaplains website](#).

## Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry Accepting Applications for January 2021



The Office for Parish Life encourages parish leaders to consider **application for the *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry* for January 2021!**

The *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry* is a ministry formation program designed to equip and advance the servant leadership capacities of individuals serving their parish in areas such as:

- Parish Pastoral Councils,
- Parish Staff,
- Directors of Religious Education and Catechists,
- Volunteer Ministry teams, and others!
- Liturgical Coordinators,

Through independent online study with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)—in English or Spanish language tracks—as well as ministry skills workshops and opportunities for prayer and reflection, *Diocesan Certificate* candidates enrich their knowledge base, while also learning practical tools for effective parish ministry in their faith communities.

The Office for Parish Life anticipates welcoming new candidates into the *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry* program in the New Year, beginning with a 'virtual' Orientation Retreat experience on January 30, 2021 from 9:00AM to 12:00PM.

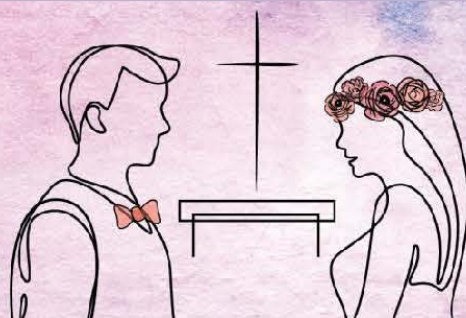
**Prospective candidates are encouraged to contact Kitty Scanlan, Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation, at 570-207-2213, or by email at [Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org) for application information, materials, and application submissions.**





## to have, to hold, to honor

For more information and resources, visit [foryourmarriage.org](http://foryourmarriage.org)



**National Marriage Week** will be celebrated between **February 7 through February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021**. This event is promoted through an international organization working to promote marriages and the many societal goods that flow from strong marriages. National Marriage Week is also supported by the USCCB.

Resources to observe National Marriage week, including a **flyer/bulletin insert**, an **at-home marriage retreat**, a **parish resource**, a **preaching resource**, a **prayer for married couples** and **intercessions** for the Universal Prayer can be found on the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's \(USCCB\) website](http://United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's (USCCB) website). The webpage will be updated as more resources become available. Married couples could also participate in an at-home marriage retreat, available both in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

**At the diocesan level**, we will also offer resources to help couples celebrate National Marriage Week. As part of the culmination of the week-long celebration, we have engaged two couples to present a **virtual marriage enrichment event for all of our diocesan faithful on World Marriage Day, February 14<sup>th</sup>**. Dual tracks will feature: Chris and Linda Padgett (English) and Joel and Nora de Loera (Spanish). To learn more about Chris and Linda Padgett, please visit <https://chrispadgett.com/>, and to learn more about Joel and Nora de Loera, please visit their [Facebook page](#).

More details about this event will be forthcoming through our Office for Parish Life and Diocesan media outlets. Please stay tuned so that you may participate, and so that you may encourage and invite the couples of your parish to participate too.

The pandemic has been stressful for all of us, and married couples have not been spared. (To read more about this, please [see this article](#) from the BBC.) I encourage you to look for ways in which your parish can celebrate this event, thereby ministering to your married couples. To contact Jen Housel about ideas or with questions, call 570-207-2213 x 1104 or [jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org).



Chris and Linda Padgett



Joel and Nora de Loera

## Wedding Anniversary Mass

The 2021 Wedding Anniversary Mass will be held on **June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**. We hope to offer an in-person celebration this year, but the details of that event will be governed by the progress made in reducing risks of Coronavirus. More information about the 2021 Wedding Anniversary Mass, and about how jubilant couples can register, will be forthcoming in early Spring.

## Virtual Grief Support Group

Winter and the post-holiday season can be difficult times to navigate grief, particularly during an ongoing period of social distancing. Please consider joining the virtual grief support group offered by Cathedral of Saint Peter Parish

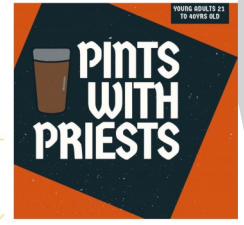
in Scranton. Anyone is welcome; you do not have to be a member of the parish to participate. The group will convene online, Wednesday evenings 6:30 to 7:30. The dates of the virtual meetings will be **January 6, 13, 20 and 27**. For more information please contact Deacon Ed Shoener at 570-814-5133 or at 570-344-7231.

## Year *Amoris Laetitia* Family

On March 19, 2021, the fifth anniversary of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia*, on the joy and beauty of familial love, Pope Francis will inaugurate the Year "*Amoris Laetitia* Family," which will conclude in June 2022. Stay tuned for more details about this celebration of marriages and families along with ideas for how your parish can join in. [Read more here](#).

"I CALL us to be servant leaders who engage in SERVICE to our neighbors near and far and who work for justice and stewardship to hasten the Reign of God."

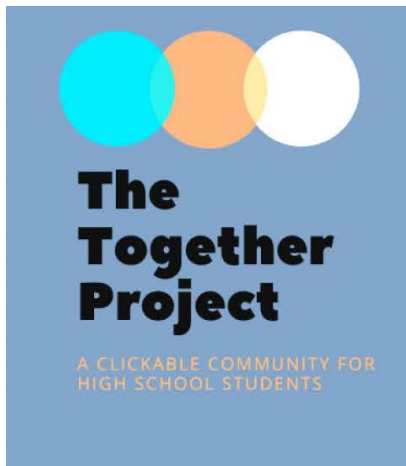
SERVICE



## Youth Retreat Updates

Our last in-person retreat was in February 2020. It's a BIG understatement to say that a lot has changed since then... and while we're all very eager to return to life as we knew it prior to the Corona Virus, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our students and volunteers. Rest assured that once we can safely host an in-person youth retreat we will be back in action!

We were so looking forward to seeing our students again for July and February's ISLI, and while it was for the best that we didn't gather in person, some of our ISLI Alumni decided they weren't going to miss out on an opportunity to still gather.....VIRTUALLY! So we came up with **The Together Project: A Clickable Community for High School Students.**



Simply put, The Together Project is not a retreat, but it is meant to keep us all connected until we can gather in person again.

**How does it work?** Peer facilitated small groups (kind of like ISLI) will meet via Zoom for one hour a week for four consecutive weeks. These small group sessions are meant to foster friendship and community and give students a place to express their joys, fears, frustrations, and anything else they've been experiencing during this pandemic.

There is also the opportunity to stay connected with your small group in between virtual meetings with a Group Me chat. This is completely optional as it would require you to download the Group Me application on your smartphone or smart device. That's it, it's that simple! OH, AND IT'S FREE OF CHARGE!

**Registration will open in mid-January 2021 for February's experience!**

## World Youth Day

World Youth Day (WYD) is a world-wide encounter with the Pope celebrated every three years in a different country. World Youth Day is a unique way to deepen your faith and grow closer to Christ, through prayer and the sacraments, together with hundreds of thousands of other young people who share your interests and ambitions.

If you are interested in joining the Diocese of Scranton's Pilgrimage, contact Shannon Kowalski at [Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org).

## Pints with Priests

"Pints with Priests" is a monthly gathering for young adults. Come and enjoy a pint of your favorite drink or ice cream and engage in light-hearted spiritual or theological conversations with your peers and some priests, right from the comfort of your own home!

The next Pints with Priests will be held on Wednesday, January 27 at 7:00pm

Click here to learn more, or contact Shannon at [Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org).

## NCYC 2021

The Diocese of Scranton is once again organizing a delegation for the National Catholic Youth Conference in November of 2021.

While details are still being developed by the NFCYM, we will hold a VIRTUAL Diocesan Info Meeting on Monday, March 1st at 6:30pm.

To register for the info meeting please email Shannon at [Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org).

## Youth/Young Adult Ministry Resources

If you are in need of resources for your youth or young adult ministry program, check out the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry website's resources at [nfcym.org/resources](http://nfcym.org/resources). There you can find free games, lessons, webinars, and more!





# OPL Month At A Glance

## January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 New Year's Day	2
3 Epiphany	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Baptism of the Lord	11	12	13 DRE/YM Remote Networking Meeting 11AM	14	15	16
17	18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	19 Christian Unity Prayer Service 12:10PM on CTV and Diocesan Social Media	20	21 Sadlier Lenten Retreat 11:00AM	22 Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of the Unborn Mass for Life 12:10PM Cathedral	23
WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY						
24 Sunday of the Word of God	25	26	27 DRE/YM Remote Networking Meeting 11AM  Pints with Priests 7PM	28	29 Deadline for Rite of Election Registrations	30
CHRISTIAN UNITY						
31						
Catholic Schools Week						

### OPL TEAM MEMBERS

Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life: **Catherine Jantsch Butel**  
 Director for WORD and Lifelong Faith Formation: **Jacki Douglas**  
 Director for WORSHIP: **David Baloga**  
 Director for SERVICE and Mission: **Shannon Kowalski**  
 Coordinator for Pilgrimages: **Fr. Andrew Hvozdovic**  
 Director for COMMUNITY and Family Development: **Jen Housel**  
 Coordinator for Ecumenical/Interfaith Relations: **Msgr. Vincent Grimalia**  
 Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation: **Kitty Scanlan**  
 Coordinator for Hispanic Ministry: **José Flores**  
 Consultant for Pastoral Council Development: **Ann Marie Cawley**  
 Events Coordinator, Diocesan Pastoral Center:  
 Administrative Assistant: **Jennifer Andres**



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